Lake Region State College

# Assessment Plan

Improving teaching and learning at Lake Region State College.

## 2026-2027

We enhance lives and community vitality through quality education.

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## Introduction

Assessment is a systematic process that educators use to evaluate, measure, and document student knowledge to enhance programs and improve student learning outcomes. Implementing a plan to assess student learning is a key component of the Higher Learning Commission's (HLC) criteria for accreditation and assumed practices. As an accredited institution, Lake Region State College (LRSC) commits to clearly stating goals for student learning and effective processes for assessment of student learning and achievement of learning goals; using the information gained from assessment to improve student learning; and linking processes for assessment of student learning, evaluation of operations, planning, and budgeting.

This assessment plan is designed to align LRSC's assessment strategies at the institution, program and course levels with its mission, strategic plan, general education objectives, and HLC standards of quality. It provides information for faculty, academic administrators, and academic support staff about assessment practices. The goal is to create a culture of assessment that leads to reflection and action and allows for continuity of assessment efforts.

## Mission

The mission of Lake Region State College, *we enhance lives and community vitality through quality education*, is guided by the North Dakota State Board of Higher Education's mission to enhance the quality of life for all those we serve and the economic and social vitality of North Dakota through the discovery, sharing and application of knowledge and by its vision of leading the nation in educational attainment through access, innovation and excellence.

## General Education Objectives

The general education objectives detail the competencies that LRSC regards as essential for the education of every student. Faculty design their course syllabi to align their curriculum to the general education objectives. Syllabi are reviewed to determine how many of the general education objectives are being delivered into, and actively implemented in, the classroom. The general education objectives can be found in Appendix A.

## Assessment Committee

The Assessment Committee at LRSC provides organization and structure to the assessment process and promotes assessment of goals and outcomes as a means of continuous improvement.

The members of the Assessment Committee include:

Betsy Bannier, Professor of Chemistry
Cindy Brown, Professor of Marketing
April Duchscher, Assistant Professor Math
Jade Erickstad, Director of Academic Affairs
Randy Fixen, Professor of Psychology
John Mariato, Career and Technical Education Division Dean
Tammy Riggin, Associate Professor Fitness Trainer Technician
Loretta Wangler, Nursing and Allied Health Division Dean
Greg Wolf, Academic Division Dean
Casey Zehrer, Vice President of Student Affairs

The committee's responsibilities are to:

1. Establish timelines for assessment activities, plans, and reports.
2. Create procedures and templates for assessment plans and reports.
3. Oversee implementation of assessment plans by program and individual faculty.
4. Provide training and consultation with faculty regarding assessment.

5. Promote campus discussion on assessment.
6. Coordinate with Administrative Council and Faculty Senate to develop links between institutional priorities, assessment, program review, and general education.
7. Disseminate assessment results.

## Assessment Process

With the understanding that assessment is a continuous process, the following process will guide the faculty and staff in their efforts: identify goals and outcomes, develop assessment tools to assess and measure each goal and outcome, use assessment tools to gather evidence, review and analyze results, implement changes, document impact of those changes on goals and outcomes, and report efforts to LRSC stakeholders.

LRSC has identified four levels of assessment: institutional, program, course, and cocurricular. Institutional assessment uses the institution's goals as the basis for assessment. It answers the overall question of institutional effectiveness; how well is LRSC achieving its mission and goals. Program assessment uses the program's mission, goals and outcomes as the basis for assessment. Course assessment are the methods developed by individual faculty based on their teaching approach, students, and learning outcomes. Cocurricular assessment measures the contribution that programs and activities outside of the classroom have on student learning.

## Institutional Assessment

Institutional assessment measures LRSC's institutional effectiveness, which is the ability to achieve the general education goals and outcomes developed to support LRSC's mission. The goal of institutional assessment is to utilize continuous methods for the improvement of educational quality and student learning. It is a cyclical process where faculty and staff plan, assess, and improve learning of students through research-based planning and evaluation. The responsibility of institutional assessment rests with the faculty and is supported by LRSC's administration. Campus planning activities provide guidance to systematically integrate the strategic plan to link assessment of student learning and the evaluation of operations, planning, and budgeting.

*General Education Goals Assessment Inventory*

Every five years the faculty assessment committee shall generate a report showing the general education goals assessed by the faculty throughout the academic year. This institution-wide assessment will identify goals that are in need of additional evaluation, identify the goals that are being evaluated thoroughly, and provide evidence that graduates have accomplished the intended general education curriculum.

*Student Self-Assessment*

In the spring of 2019, a new survey was conducted for students graduating with a liberal arts degree or students who had completed at least 30 credits and were transferring. It is administered every fall and spring semester on the Learning Management System Blackboard to these students. The survey was constructed based on the essential learning outcomes (ELO) that the state general education council adopted in 2016. Students are provided with a definition of the ELO. They then rank themselves on a scale from 1 to 5, with 1 being low and 5 being high, as to how well they believe they could demonstrate that outcome. Students then provide examples of how they demonstrated that outcome while attending LRSC.

At academic division meetings held during faculty in-service, the academic division faculty review the student input, discuss areas that need improvement, and plan for curricular changes to facilitate improvement.

*Multiple Delivery Modes, Consistent Outcomes*

In 2015, LRSC joined HLC's Assessment Academy and developed an assessment project to assess student learning in three primary general education areas of English, math and science to evaluate whether learning was consistent throughout delivery methods.

The project has three clear outcomes. First, to demonstrate the extent of consistency in achieving the predetermined course outcomes across delivery modes. To achieve this outcome, instructors teaching the same general education courses using different delivery modes work together within their respective departments to develop and administer a common course assessment. Instructors then collaborate in interpreting the resulting data and correcting possible inconsistencies on a semester-by-semester basis. Assessment results are analyzed for both reliability and validity. Instructors continuously collaborate and update the assessment tool and rubrics to ensure it is measuring the student learning in each general education course.

Second, is to provide evidence of student learning. The project intends to show that courses provide equal rigor regardless of delivery mode. To achieve this outcome, the assessment team will conduct a comprehensive analysis of the resulting data.

Third, extent of participation in the Multiple Delivery Modes, Consistent Outcomes: Assessing Student Learning project over time will be documented. Instructors will meet to evaluate their assessment method and use the results to improve each individual course. Part-time instructors will work closely with full-time faculty to create more consistent instruction among courses. Ideally, this would lead to improved communication across disciplines as a culture of assessment begins to form. By adding general education courses from new departments to the project each semester, we intend to strengthen institution-wide perceptions of the value of student assessment.

*Persistence, Retention and Graduation Rates*

The persistence, retention, and graduation rates for varying cohorts are calculated as measures of student success. LRSC reports these rates based on guidelines set by Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) and Student Achievement Measure (SAM) as external benchmarks in assessment. Since IPEDS and SAM account for only a small population of students, LRSC has also implemented some "home grown" strategies to calculate the persistence, retention, and graduation rates of all degree-seeking students and students by specific cohorts. These strategies are published on the institutional research page of the LRSC website.

*CCSSE*

The Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) provides information on student engagement, a key indicator of learning and, therefore, of the quality of community colleges. The survey asks questions that assess institutional practices and student behaviors that are correlated highly with student learning and student retention. The survey is used as an outcome measure for a variety of institutional and cocurricular assessment methods.

## Program Assessment

Program assessment measures how students are learning as they progress through a specific program. The goals of program assessment are to ensure that the program's mission, goals and outcomes are being addressed across the curriculum, identify ways that the program can be improved, and inform faculty about relevant issues that can impact their program and student learning.

Every fall semester, faculty review their program's mission and student learning outcomes to ensure they are reflected in the curriculum and align with LRSC's mission. The Program Assessment Report (Appendix C) will be completed to address the following:

1. Identify the program's mission and goals.
2. Identify the program's student learning outcomes.
3. Discuss the relationship between the program's goals and LRSC's mission.
4. Determine what assessment methods will be used to measure learning.
5. Describe the system used to compile and analyze the data.
6. Identify the changes that were or will be implemented to improve student learning.
7. Detail how the assessment data was used to improve student learning.

Faculty report the results from this assessment to their peers at meetings during fall and spring in-service.

*Annual Program Enrollment Report*
Every fall semester, the Director of Academic Affairs prepares the Annual Program Enrollment Report. The report details career and technical education enrollment by program, academic division enrollment by subject area, and the total students enrolled and credit hours produced by benefitted faculty. Any career and technical education program with fewer than nine full-time students per full-time faculty and any academic division departments with fewer than twenty full-time students per full-time faculty is reviewed as a low enrollment program and a low enrollment comprehensive evaluation is conducted.

*Low Enrollment Comprehensive Evaluation*
Prior to an official designation as low enrollment, the Director of Academic Affairs, in cooperation with the program faculty, conducts a comprehensive review to identify the key indicators of program strength as they relate to enrollment. These indicators may include the ending enrollment numbers for at least the previous three terms, verification of all students in the program, any changes in the number of program faculty, the program's budget (not to include salaries and benefits), the number of program related courses delivered by part time instructors (and related enrollments), prior marketing efforts, employer partners or the lack thereof, and industry strength and hiring trends.

The Division Deans shall make an official recommendation to the President as to whether or not the program will be officially listed as a low enrollment program for the current academic year, only after this comprehensive review has been completed. Faculty in a program officially designated as low enrollment will review their program and complete an action plan for improvement in collaboration with the Vice President of Advancement, the Vice President of Student Affairs, and the Division Deans. Programs listed on low enrollment status for two consecutive years will be notified in writing that the program may be considered for restructuring or closure during the next academic year.

*LRSC Program Review*
LRSC conducts a comprehensive program review to assess the strengths of each program and to discover areas for growth and improvement. In years ending in 3, 6, and 9, the Chief Academic Officer, in collaboration with the faculty senate president, appoints a committee to lead the program review process. The program review report is submitted to faculty senate and administrative council for evaluation, review, and action.

*NDCTE Program Review*
A program review is completed for each career and technical education (CTE) program. On a five-year rotating schedule, LRSC's CTE programs are evaluated by North Dakota CTE (NDCTE). The purpose of the review is to ensure the commitment to quality CTE programs, compliance with federal Carl Perkins legislation, and compliance with North Dakota State Board for CTE policies.

The evaluation process consists of a self-evaluation completed by all CTE program faculty and an on-site evaluation and review. During the on-site evaluation, evaluators meet individually with program faculty to discuss the self-evaluation. The evaluators meet with LRSC administrators, staff and students. In addition, they review facilities, equipment, and curriculum. The team provides commendations, suggestions, and recommendations for improvement.

*Employer Satisfaction Survey*
Several CTE programs administer satisfaction surveys to employers of LRSC graduates. The survey measures employer satisfaction with the graduate's knowledge and understanding of job responsibilities, qualities generally expected of employees, general skills, specialized skills, and work readiness.

*Exams, Certification*
Students in the American Sign Language, Automotive Technology, Fitness Trainer Technician, Marketing, Information Technology, Precision Agriculture, and Wind Energy Technician programs can choose to take industry certification exams. Faculty report the results of first-time pass rates each year to the Director Academic Affairs. These exams are often used as career and technical education program assessments.

*Exams, Licensure*
The Licensed Practice Nurse, Associate Degree Nurse, and Peace Officer Training programs prepare students to sit for national exams that are required for employment in the industry. Faculty report the results of first-time pass rates each year to the Director Academic Affairs. These exams are used as career and technical education program assessments.

*Placement Rates*
The Director of Academic Affairs calculates job placement rates on an annual basis. The placement rate represents the percentage of total program graduates who obtain employment in, or related to, their field of study or who are seeking additional education. The data is collected six months after the end of the academic year to allow students time to obtain employment.

## Course Assessment

Course assessment measures the difference between students' existing knowledge and the intended learning outcomes. The goal of course assessment is to monitor the progress of student learning through the course to ensure students are learning as expected. Instructors will analyze the results from course assessment to make curricular change that will improve teaching and student learning. They will re-assess outcomes to determine the effect those changes had on learning.

Once per academic year, all instructors will complete the Course Assessment Report (Appendix B) to address the following:

1. Identify course objectives and student learning outcomes that are meaningful and measurable.
2. Align the student learning outcomes with general education goals.
3. Determine what assessment techniques will be used to measure learning.
4. Describe the system used to compile and analyze the data.
5. Identify the changes implemented in curriculum and/or teaching methods to improve learning.
6. Detail how the assessment data was used to improve student learning.

Faculty report the results from their assessment to their peers at meetings during fall and spring in-service.

## Cocurricular Assessment

Cocurricular assessment refers to the improvement of student learning outside of the classroom through activities that provide learning opportunities in support of LRSC's curricular programs and institutional mission and goals.

Student learning is not exclusive to the classroom. Many of LRSC's general education outcome goals are achieved through experiences outside of the classroom. Cocurricular activities at LRSC include: athletics, first-year experience course, new student orientation, student clubs and organizations, student life and intramurals, and student success services.

Each cocurricular activity has clearly stated student learning outcomes that align with LRSC's mission and general education goals. The success of these activities is assessed through both standardized and home-grown assessment tools and are measured through enrollment trends and persistence, retention, and graduation rates.

Once per academic year, cocurricular activity supervisors review their activity's mission and student learning outcomes to ensure they are reflected in the curriculum and align with LRSC's mission. The Cocurricular Assessment Report (Appendix D) will be completed to address the following:

1. Identify the student learning outcomes assessed during the cocurricular activity that were meaningful and measurable.
2. Specify the General Education Goal(s) assessed during the activity.
3. Indicate the assessment technique used to measure success of the activity.
4. Describe the system used to compile and analyze the data.
5. Identify the changes that were or will be implemented in curriculum and /or teaching methods to improve learning.
6. Detail how the assessment data was used to improve student learning.

Activity supervisors report the results from this assessment to their peers annually, as detailed in their assessment plan.

### Assessment Methods 5-Year Timeline

| Method | 2024 | 2025 | 2026 | 2027 | 2028 | 2029 | 2030 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Annual Program Enrollment Report | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| CCSSE | X | | X | | X | | X |
| Cocurricular Assessment Report | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| Course Assessment Report | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| Employer Satisfaction Survey | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| Exams, Certification | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| Exams, Licensure | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| General Education Goals Assessment Inventory | X | | | | | x | |
| Institutional Assessment | | | X | | | x | |
| Low Enrollment Comprehensive Evaluation | X | X | X | X | X | x | X |
| Multiple Delivery Modes, Consistent Outcomes | | X | | X | | x | |
| Persistence, Retention, Graduation Rates | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| Placement Rates | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| Program Assessment Report | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| Program Review, CTE | | | | X | | | |
| Program Review, LRSC | | | X | | | X | |
| Student Self-Assessment | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |

# APPENDIX A

General Education Objectives

I. An educated person must have a critical appreciation of society and of self. This includes some understanding and experience in thinking about moral and ethical problems which enable an educated person to make discriminating moral choices—personal/interpersonal skills.

1. Understand how a human being behaves individually and how one is linked to one's social and natural environment—know thyself.
2. Understand the complexities and uncertainties of personal and social environments, understand how individuals may be changed and controlled by their environments, and develop skills to change and control environments—personal change and growth.
3. Apply knowledge gained in the educational process and use that knowledge in everyday living—apply knowledge to the real world.
4. Develop skills for designing and evaluating a personal mental and physical health program—mental and physical wellness.
5. Recognize the importance of leisure and develop the use of leisure for positive life changes—importance of leisure.
6. Develop the ability to make responsible decisions based upon understanding and experience in discussing moral and ethical problems in society—values and ethics.
7. Develop work habits and ethics necessary to function effectively in the workplace—work-related skills.

II. An educated person must be able to think, speak, and write effectively—communication/thinking skills.

1. Develop a working knowledge of the English language to communicate effectively by writing and speaking clearly and concisely—present ideas (oral/written).
2. Develop the skills necessary to gather, integrate, synthesize, and analyze written and oral information in a critical manner—rational/critical/higher-order thinking.
3. Use information objectively for solving problems and arriving at alternative solutions—problem-solving skills;
4. Develop the critical listening and reading skills needed to interpret the messages of speakers and authors—reading/listening critically.
5. Nurture creative thinking and intellectual curiosity through opportunities and incentives and encourage attempts at different, divergent solutions to open-ended questions, problems, and situations—creativity/intellectual curiosity.
6. Conceptualize links between events, entities, and ideas and the large context in which they occur—integrate ideas of the world.

III. An educated person must have an understanding of other cultures to enable one to conduct life with reference to the wider world within which one lives—global/multi-cultural experiences.

1. Gain knowledge of western and non-western cultures and other times in order to better understand the world and its people—the world/Eastern/Western civilizations.
2. Recognize that world events are interdependently linked, are affected by the social environment, and are influenced by institutions created within an interactive society, and understand that impact on one event has ramifications for other events and for the whole—understand world events from differing disciplines.

3. Nurture a philosophy that asserts the dignity of humanity while understanding the value of world diversity in race, ethnicity, and culture—global culturalism.
4. Encourage development of a working knowledge of a second language—communication and understanding.

IV. An educated person must have an appreciation for and an informed acquaintance with the arts and humanities. Experiencing the aesthetics of literature, the arts, and history will provide enrichment in a variety of diverse fields and life experiences—aesthetic/ intellectual experiences.

1. Develop a knowledge of and appreciation for human accomplishments in art, music, literature, and history—appreciation for the arts and humanities;
2. Develop an understanding of the connectedness and inter-dependency between events, entities, and ideas and the larger context in which they exist—inter-disciplinary understanding;
3. Develop an understanding of literary concepts presented through literary works in the humanities, history, and English—understanding literary concepts.
4. Develop a consciousness of history and an understanding of the common heritage of western civilization—understand social, economic political structures.
5. Foster an understanding of the benefits and responsibilities of living in a democratic society—citizenship/leadership.

V. An educated person must have an informed acquaintance with and an appreciation for science and mathematics and their contributions to society—mathematics/sciences applications.

1. Develop a conceptual understanding of mathematics and a practical knowledge of mathematical application—numerical.
2. Understand and appreciate the natural physical environment of the planet Earth, thus promoting an ethic of stewardship and ecology—environment.
3. Gain knowledge of the properties of the universe for understanding and application—physical.
4. Foster an attitude of intellectual inquiry and methodology which will expand one's view of the universe and the place of humanity within it—scientific method/inquiry.
5. Provide a general knowledge of the human body and its systems—biological.

VI. An educated person must be literate in current and future technologies—technology/computers/ information applications.

1. Explore the nature, role, and impact of technology on the environment and society—technology literacy.
2. Develop a working knowledge of computers and computer programs and their functions—computer literacy.
3. Apply current technologies to access and utilization of information—application of technology.
4. Develop the skills necessary to locate and gather information from both print and non-print resources—library/information literacy.

VII. An educated person must have a continued commitment to life-long learning—life-long learning experiences/skills.

1. Develop a pattern of intellectual curiosity and inquiry which promotes life-long learning—value of life-long learning.
2. Nurture and promote the ability to adapt to an ever-changing society—adapt to the future.
3. Develop an interest in serving the community—community service.

# APPENDIX B

**LAKE REGION STATE COLLEGE**
**Course Assessment Report**

Course assessment are the methods developed by individual faculty based on their teaching approach, students, and learning outcomes. The goal of course assessment is to ensure students are learning as expected.

Once per year, fall or spring semester, each instructor will complete the Course Assessment Report form and submit it to Tammy Riggin - tammy.riggin@lrsc.edu.

| **Submitted By:** | **Semester:** |
|---|---|
| **Course:** | |

| |
|---|
| **Identify course objective and student learning outcomes assessed during this process that were meaningful and measurable:** |
| **Specify the General Education Goal(s) assessed during the process.** |
| **Indicate the assessment technique used to measure student learning.** |
| **Describe the system used to compile and analyze the data.** |
| **Identify the changes that were or will be implemented in the curriculum and /or teaching methods to improve learning.** |
| **Detail how the assessment data was used to improve student learning.** |

# APPENDIX C

**LAKE REGION STATE COLLEGE**
**Program Assessment Report**

Program assessment measures how students are learning as they progress through a specific program. The goals of program assessment are to ensure that the program's mission, goals and student learning outcomes are being addressed across the curriculum, identify ways that the program can be improved, and inform faculty about relevant issues that can impact their program and student learning.

Every spring semester, the CTE faculty will complete the Program Assessment Report form and submit it to Cindy Brown - cindy.m.brown@lrsc.edu.

| |
|---|
| **Submitted By:** |
| **Program:** |

| |
|---|
| **Identify the program's mission and goals:** |
| **Identify the program's student learning outcomes:** |
| **Discuss the relationship between the program's goals and LRSC's mission:** |
| **Determine what assessment methods will be used to measure learning:** |

| |
|---|
| **Describe the system used to compile and analyze the data:** |
| **Identify the changes that were or will be implemented in curriculum and /or teaching methods to improve learning:** |
| **Detail how the assessment data was used to improve student learning:** |

# APPENDIX D

## LAKE REGION STATE COLLEGE
## Cocurricular Assessment Report

Cocurricular assessment refers to the improvement of student learning outside of the classroom through activities that provide learning opportunities in support of LRSC's curricular programs and institutional mission and goals.

Once per year, fall or spring semester, each cocurricular activity supervisor will complete the Cocurricular Assessment Report form and submit it to April Duchscher, at april.duchscher@lrsc.edu.

| **Submitted By:** | **Semester:** |
|---|---|
| **Cocurricular Activity:** | |

| |
|---|
| **Identify the student learning outcomes assessed during the cocurricular activity that were meaningful and measurable.** |
| **Specify the General Education Goal(s) assessed during the activity.** |
| **Indicate the assessment technique used to measure success of the activity.** |
| **Describe the system used to compile and analyze the data.** |

| |
|---|
| **Identify the changes that were or will be implemented to the activity to improve learning.** |
| **Detail how the assessment data was used to improve student learning.** |

# APPENDIX E

## Resources

The following resources have been collected to help faculty locate techniques, methods, and tools they can adapt and use to assess their courses and programs. All of the books are available in the LRSC Learning Commons.


Banta, T. W. & Palomba, C. A. (2014). *Assessment essentials: planning, implementing, and improving assessment in higher education.* Jossey-Bass.

Keeling, R.P. (Ed.) (2006). *Learning Reconsidered 2: Implementing a campus-wide focus on the student experience*. Washington, DC: NASPA.

Kuh, Ikenberry, Jankowski, Cain, Ewell, Hutchings and Jillian Kinzie. (2015). *Using evidence of student learning to improve higher education*. Jossey-Bass.

Maki, P. L. (2017). *Real-time student assessment: meeting the imperative for improved time to degree, closing the opportunity gap, and assuring student competencies for 21st-century needs*. Stylus Publishing.

Massa, L. J. & Kasimatis, M. (2017). *Meaningful and manageable program assessment*. Stylus Publishing.

Suski, L. A. (2013). *Assessing student learning: a common sense guide*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Walvoord, B. E. & Banta, T. W. (2010). *Assessment clear and simple: a practical guide for institutions, departments, and general education*. Jossey-Bass.

"Assessment and Accountability". Inside Higher Ed
https://www.insidehighered.com/news/focus/assessment_and_accountability

"Course-Level Assessment Guide". Cornell University Center for Teaching Innovation
https://www.cte.cornell.edu/teaching-ideas/assessing-student-learning/course-level-assessment-guide.html

"Evaluate Course-Level Learning". Berkeley Center for Teaching and Learning
https://teaching.berkeley.edu/resources/improve/evaluate-course-level-learning

"Intersection of Assessment and Learning". Association for the Assessment of Learning in Higher Education
https://www.aalhe.org/page/Intersection

"Program-Level Assessment". Georgetown University
http://assessment.georgetown.edu/program-level-assessment/